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## REVIEWS AND NEW BOOKS

### General Works, Theory and Its History

*The Happiness of Nations: A Beginning in Political Engineering.*

By JAMES MACKAYE. (New York: B. W. Huebsch. 1915.

Pp. 256. \$1.25.)

The title of this book is plainly suggested by that of Adam Smith's great work, and Mr. MacKaye makes it clear that he has set out to do for the science of happiness what Adam Smith did for the science of wealth. It is a large undertaking, and the reader finds himself wishing that the author were not so frequently prevented, by the limits of his space, from elaborating some of his points as fully as their importance demands.

The author bases his attempt to establish a science of political engineering on the "simple and unassailable assumption that the goal of nations or of society is to do right, and to avoid doing wrong." It is necessary, therefore, at the outset, to determine the logical criteria of right and wrong. All moral codes may be divided into two classes, the intuitionist and the hedonistic. The philosophy of intuitionism is examined by the author, critically and fairly, and is found to be illogical and inadequate, in spite of its almost universal acceptance by the moral philosophers of the past. Of all hedonistic codes that which is of greatest interest to mankind as a whole, and which is therefore the safe guide for political conduct, is the utilitarian. Its goal is the "maximum quantitative excess of happiness over unhappiness among mankind as a whole, during the foreseeable future." It concerns itself solely with the amount of happiness, not at all with its distribution. Orthodox economics makes the mistake, very common among thinkers on ethical subjects, of confusing happiness with the causes of happiness. The economic reasoning is thus: Since wealth is an essential for happiness, that nation first months of operation would, even in times of peace, be abnormal therefore the goal of national effort should be the greatest possible production of wealth. The fallacy lies in ignoring consumption, which is a much more vital interest than production. Production exists merely for the sake of consumption, and if productive activities are carried to the point where they interfere with the greatest possibilities of consumption, they defeat the

ends of happiness. The end is sacrificed to the means. The author proceeds to analyze consumption and the consumptive efficiency of mankind, in order to indicate how consumption may be so directed as to produce the greatest total amount of happiness. It is shown that the greatest total amount of happiness from a given amount of production will result in a society where there are no very high, and no very low, rates of consumption among the members. Thus democracy finds a logical basis in utilitarianism. The question as to who should direct the productive and consumptive acts of society is examined, with the conclusion that, in general, socialism should be promoted in production, and individualism in consumption.

Up to this point the author's treatment is satisfying and his argument convincing. His identification of logic with common sense is justified in his own discussions. The last section of the book, however, contains a rather grievous disappointment. The author now leaves the position which he took at the outset, of confining his analysis to the human species, and shows that, logically, perfect altruism ought to concern itself with happiness among all sentient beings, thinking, as always, only of the amount of happiness, not of its distribution. The reader expects this proposition to be followed by a consideration of the duty of man to the other sentient animals on the globe. Instead of this, however, the author propounds the surmise that ultimately the production of happiness will require "the coöperation of two distinct classes of sentient beings," one of which shall be equipped in the highest degree for producing happiness, and the other for feeling happiness. This second class "will not necessarily or even probably possess either intelligence, altruism or will." Its sole function will be to feel happiness. The disappointment which this finale involves is softened a little, but only a little, by the author's recognition of the extreme, not to say fantastic, character of his supposition. He asserts that the scientific imagination can easily conceive of such an evolution, in the light of what has been accomplished in the past. This is true. But the author's position would be much strengthened if he had done two things: first, shown that there has been some indication of the beginnings of such a process of evolution in the history of mankind during the last few thousand years; and, second, considered the question whether there do not already exist, among

sentient beings, types which, in respect to their capacity for feeling happiness, resemble the postulated new species much more closely than does man. In that case perfect altruism would seem to require that man devote his energies to promoting the happiness of these non-human groups, in the interval of waiting for the evolution of the new species. Judging by external expressions, it is only a few times a year that the ordinary human being experiences the ecstatic joy felt by a dog on the return of his master after a two hours' absence. It is the rare human individual who ever achieves the state of placid contentment and peace exhibited by the cat dozing before the fire. It would have been logical if the author, before asking his readers to contemplate seriously the evolution of a species of beings of whom there is not now the faintest foreshadowing, had discussed the question whether the interests of utility in the universe would not best be subserved, for the present, if men, who have the necessary intelligence, altruism, and will, devoted their entire time to creating happiness for the largest possible number of cats and dogs.

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#### NEW BOOKS

BAGEHOT, W. *The works and life of Walter Bagehot.* The "Works" in nine volumes; the "Life" in one volume, by MRS. RUSSELL BARRINGTON. (New York: Longmans. 1915. \$25.)

BLACKMAR, F. W. and GILLIN, J. L. *Outlines of sociology.* (New York: Macmillan. 1915. Pp. viii, 586, illus. \$2.)

First published in 1905 under the title, *The Elements of Sociology.*

BOGART, E. L. *Business economics.* (Chicago: LaSalle Exten. Univ. 1915. Pp. viii, 268.)

COKER, F. W. *Readings in political philosophy.* (New York: Macmillan. 1914. Pp. xv, 573.)

FERRIÈRE, A. *La loi du progrès en biologie et en sociologie et la question de l'organisme social.* (Paris: Giard & Brière. 1915. Pp. 680. 15 fr.)

GIDE, C. and RIST, C. *A history of economic doctrines. From the time of the physiocrats to the present day.* Authorized translation by R. RICHARDS, from the second revised and augmented edition of 1913 under the direction of the late Professor WILLIAM SMART. (New York: Heath. Pp. xxiii, 672. N. d. \$3.)

Reviewed by James Bonar in the REVIEW for June, 1911 (vol. I), p. 306.